(b) if so, wether remaining services would also be considered for enhancement of retirement age, at par with others; and

(c) if so, when and if not, the reasons for discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Pending issue of final Government orders enhancing the retirement age of officers belonging to Army Medical Corps (AMC), Army Dental Corps, Military Nursing Services and Remount Veterinary Corps (RVC), an interim order was issued on 30.5.98 deferring the retirement of armed forces Personnel, except, interalia, Lieutenant Generals of the Army Medical Corps who retire at the age of 60 years on attaining the age of superannuation. Thereafter, another interim order was issued on 28.7.98 deferring the retirement of Lt. Generals of the Army Medical Corps. The final orders in this regard will be issued soon.

सहारनपुर में सैन्य अभ्यासों से समस्याएं

1564. **श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सहारनपुर के जंगलों में सैन्य अभ्यासों में सेना द्वारा प्रयोग किए गए गोला-बारूद से आसपास रहने वाले लोगों का जनजीवन अस्त-व्यस्त हो रहा है,;

(ख) क्या अभ्यास के दौरान अनफटे विस्फोटकों से धातु निकालने के चक्कर में अधिकतर लोगों की जानें गई हैं या अनेक लोग अपने अंगों को खो चुके हैं, और

(ग) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार आसपास के गांवों में कोई जागरूकता अभियान चलाएगी और प्रभावित ग्रामवासियों को मुआवजा देगी?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जार्ज फर्नान्डीज): (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) सरकार के पास इस तरह की किसी विशिष्ट घटना की कोई सूचना नहीं है।

(ग) समीपस्थ गांवों में रहने वाले लोगों को पर्याप्त चेतावनी देने वाली हिदायतें पहले से ही विद्यमान हैं ताकि वे रेंज के खतरनाक क्षेत्र में आवागमन न करें। किसी व्यक्ति के मारे जाने/जख्मी होने पर अनुग्रह राशि का भुगतान करने संबंधी अनुदेश भी विद्यमान हैं।

Building norms for cantonment towns

1565. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report in the Hindustan Times dated 29th January, 1999 under the caption, "Building norms for cantonment towns-Environment, Defence Ministries at loggerheads";

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction to the observations made therein and the facts of the matter;

(c) the details of fresh initiatives taken/ proposed to resolve the matter;

(d) whether Government have framed building norms for cantonment towns; if so, when and the details thereof; and

(e) the details of proposals received for release of land for private construction and action taken thereon during last three years, cantonment-wise?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) There is no conflict between Ministry of Environment & Forest and Ministry of Defence. The restrictions imposed by Southern Command have been appreciated by the Ministry of Environment & Forest. To bring about uniformity of building norms a committee has been constituted during 1998 to look into the matter.

(e) Under the existing policy there is no provision for provding Defence land to private parties for construction.

Organisation for protection off space

1566. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up an organisation for the protection of SPACE; on the lines of protection of land, sea and air by Army, Navy and Air Force, respectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) from which date the organisation as commenced functioning or is expected to commence functioning?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Removal of unexploded shells from firing ranges

1567. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "unexploded shells maiming many at army firing range", appearing in the Hindustan Times dated the 18th February, 1999;

(b) what is the criteria for identifying firing ranges by armed forces and the extent to wich consultations, if any, are held for monitoring of firing ranges with forest or other departments; and

(c) what steps Government would suggest to ensure that the unexploded shells are removed from firing ranges immediately so that common people are not affected by it in any manner?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Army authorities in consultation with State Governments indentify large tracts of land suitable for the purpose. Notifications under the Manoeuvres Field Firing and Artillery Practices Act, 1938 are then issued by State Government after seeking prior clearance from State Forest Department and Ministry of Environment and Forests wherever necessary.

(c) As per existing instructions, a unit or army formation which carries out firing practice records the location of unexploded shells/bombs at the end of firing on each day. These unexploded shells are required to be destroyed.

युद्ध में मारे गये सैनिकों की विधवाओं और उनके बच्चों के लिए आवासीय योजना

1568. **श्रीमती सरोज दुबे:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने युद्ध में तथा सीमा पर मारे गए सैनिकों की विधवाओं और बच्चों के लिए कोई आवासीय योजना बनाई है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जॉर्ज फर्नान्डीज): (क) से (ग) आर्मी वेलफेअर हाउसिंग आर्गेनाइजेशन ने अपनी विभिन्न आवासीय योजनाओं के अंतर्गत निर्मित तीन प्रतिशत मकान सेना कार्मिकों की विधवाओं को वरीयता के आधार पर आबंटित करने के लिए निर्धारित कर दिए हैं। कार्रवाई में मारे गए सशस्त्र सैन्य कार्मिकों को इंदिरा आवास योजना में भी शामिल कर दिया गया है। कुछ राज्य सरकारें भी अपनी आवासीय योजनाओं के अंतर्गत उन्हें आवासीय स्थान तथा आवास प्रदान करती हैं।

Accidents of Indian Naval Ships

1569. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian naval ships that have been involved in accidents at sea in the last five years, giving the details thereof; and the amount of loss, in terms of men and material, suffered by the Navy;

(b) what were the reasons for the accidents and were those accidents inquired into; and

(c) if so, the outcome of investigations and the action taken to check such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) During the last five years, only one Indian Naval Ship has met with an accident at Sea. INS Jyoti, the fleet tanker while on her return journey from Philippines, collided with a Bulk Carrier "MV Yickwing" of Panaman registration on 01 November 1998 in the Malacca Strait. Both the ships have sustained extensive damage to structure. However, no personnel were injured. The High Court of Malaya Jahan Bahru in Malaysia has been approached to claim compensation of damage from "MV Yickwing". A Board of Inquiry has been ordered to inquire into the reasons for the collision. The inquiry is in progress.

Inadequacy of defence preparedness

1570. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our defence